

My Ref: PA / CM 113

Your Ref:

Date: 7 April 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

Firstly, we would like to thank every single business who has stepped up in these unprecedented times to help the nation through this crisis.

We know many employers within Staffordshire are already talking to our teams and helping us to promote the iCare Initiative to their staff. We are very grateful for this help. But the scale of the challenge is growing, not shrinking, so we have to do more. We all have the opportunity to make a big difference to the lives of thousands of vulnerable Staffordshire residents, and to do this we will need to continue to work together.

This government has set out an unprecedented comprehensive package of support for business through this difficult time. We have all become familiar with the term furlough, which is protecting large numbers of employees from being made redundant whilst we fight this dreadful virus. We recognise the extremely difficult challenges the private sector faces, but thousands of vulnerable people across the county rely on us for their care. We face an immediate challenge to ensure this care can continue as the Covid-19 situation worsens.

Furlough is not, as supported by recent government guidance, a reason to restrict people's ability to work with us, either as a volunteer or through paid employment at this time. You will be aware that government has clarified its guidance on the furlough position and it is clear that employees can start a new job when on furlough. The guidance does say it has to be allowed under their existing employment contract. We would encourage you to waive any provision at this time that may be included in your employees' contracts of employment prohibiting them from taking a second job. This would be a great effort in support of our iCare campaign and would release some of the most skilled workers and employees that we have across Staffordshire to do their very best in support of the national crisis.

We seek your help. We would ask each one of you to promote iCare, encourage your staff to find out more about our campaign, and help them to volunteer or take a second job on a temporary basis if this is something they wish to do. Please support them to find a solution and to make a positive contribution towards our Staffordshire family, to help us to support those that need our help. The more people we can ensure receive care, the more we can keep them out of hospital and ease the pressure on the NHS.

Further details can be found at [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/icare](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/icare)

Yours faithfully



**Philip Atkins, OBE**  
**Leader of the Council**



**John Henderson, CB**  
**Chief Executive**

